

From The Author

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ADVICE
TO
EDITORS,
OF
NEWSPAPERS.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.



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to
EDITORS
OF
Newspapers.

—————“ Let me see wherein
“ My tongue hath wrong'd him ; if it do him right,
“ Then he hath wrong'd himself ; if he be free,
“ Why then my taxing, like a wild-goose, flies
“ Unclaim'd by any man.”

AS YOU LIKE IT.

London:

PRINTED FOR ALEXANDER MAC PHERSON, RUSSEL-
COURT, COVENT-GARDEN.

1799

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ADVICE

TO

Editors of Newspapers.

GENTLEMEN,

AS your works are now, of all others, most generally read, it is highly proper that they should be worthy of such universal attention; and as some of you, notwithstanding your brilliant talents and fertile imaginations, may not be fully acquainted with the mysteries of our profession, permit a brother Editor to impart to you the fruits of his experience.

In the present state of political *furor*, when no one can stand neuter; when all descriptions of men, from the peer to the shoe-black, feel it their duty to give their advice as to the government of the kingdom; when even the women, whose newspaper reading was heretofore confined to the lists and accounts of marriages, deaths, divorces, fires, murders, and executions, are now eager to observe the progress of the revolutions of empires; a newspaper strictly impartial

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would

would not find readers ; a circumstance of which Editors in general seem to be fully aware. It is therefore necessary to take a side ; and in doing so, I trust you have too much good sense to be swayed by your feelings, or your judgment ; by your sentiments of loyalty, on the one hand, or patriotism on the other ; your admiration of the constitutional measures of Mr. PITT, or of the virtues and talents of Mr. Fox :—no ; your sole consideration must be, your superior expectations from the one or other party—“ *c'est toujours le véritable Amphitryon, qui donne à dîner.**

If you should not have had the good fortune to be bought by either party, it may not be amiss to maintain, what may be properly termed an *armed neutrality*—that is to say, an apparent impartiality,

* The following account of the political complexion of the English Journals, which appeared in the French *Magasin Encyclopedique* of 1st Germinal, 7th year, (21st March, 1799) will make you smile.

“ The *Morning Chronicle* has lost much of its opposition point, since the imprisonment of its principal Editor, PERRY. The *Telegraph*, the *Gazetteer*, the *Morning Post*, and the *Courier*, are also strongly in the interest of the antiministerial party ; the last of these is quite violent ; and the scandalous Journal of the Minister, which its author takes the trouble of directing, is considered often not very authentic. The Ministry have staunch supporters in the *Morning Herald*, the *Times* ; and above all, the *St. James's Chronicle*, commonly called the *Old Woman*. The *Star* and the *Oracle* are commendable for their impartiality ; and the parliamentary debates, as well as the news, are in these given with the least distortion.”

tiality, under cover of which you may exercise your satire, and your wit, if you possess any, against both sides. This will let them know what you have in your power, and may induce them to reflect, whether it be more advisable to have you for a friend or an opponent. It is the true way of setting yourself up to auction to the highest bidder, and it is a plan which I have known most successfully carried into execution. In the mean time, as you have thus an opportunity of gratifying all parties, by attacking their opponents, your journal may have a more extensive circulation, than if you confined your severities to one description of persons. Nor need you in this case be afraid of giving offence to the connections of the characters you satirize, as you have always an opportunity of retorting in the next paper; and besides you may be paid for doing so.

However, with due deference, I beg leave to suggest a material improvement upon this plan; namely, to devote particular parts of your paper to the different parties: the second page, for instance, to badger the Minister, and the third page to defend his measures, and vent your scurrility against the Opposition. This scheme has so many obvious advantages, that it would be an insult to your understandings to enlarge upon it. At all events, whatever side you espouse, it may be attended with good effects, occasionally, and as it were by accident, to let slip something against
your

your own party. Among the many advantages attendant upon this practice, I shall just hint at the opening it leaves you to turn about, when it may be conducive to your interest, and the immediate satisfaction of *sometimes* speaking according to your conscience.

Priority of intelligence being the first recommendation to a newspaper, every means, every art, must be used to attain it. It is generally believed, that we Editors are connected with men high in office, from whom, and by an extensive correspondence in foreign parts, we are enabled to inform the public of the measures of government, the secrets of the different cabinets of Europe, and, in a word, of every thing that is acting in the great theatre of the world, both behind the scenes and before the curtain. It is unnecessary to tell you, that this is a mistaken notion; that our foreign correspondence is in a great measure imaginary—somewhat upon a par with that of the Political Steward, in *Kotzebue's Stranger*—and, that if we were even acquainted with persons holding offices of state, these men are not so communicative, even to the Editors of their own journals, unless occasionally when it is necessary to propagate a particular article of intelligence; and even then it does not always follow that it is authentic.

Our sources of information, Gentlemen, are very different. Although we have no communication

cation with the great men themselves, their servants are not altogether inaccessible. Persons in office will mention to a friend at table, what they would not communicate to the Editor of a newspaper. Every such information, every hint is caught at by our friends in waiting; and although they may not be permitted to be present during private conversations, yet there are such conveniences as key-holes; and it is easy to make excuses for coming into the dining room: in short, "walls have ears."

There are also such persons as under-clerks, messengers and porters in the different offices, who can glean intelligence in the same way, and by other means which it is not difficult to conceive. Besides, all this description of people become practical physiognomists, and can translate the plumpness or length of a Minister's face, the openness or gloom of his brow, into good or bad news; and from such *short-hand notes*, detail a victory, a defeat, or a revolution.

We have it also in our own power, by frequenting coffee-houses resorted to by public characters, or men known to have intelligence, to reap advantage from the art of listening; and, if we happen to have a tolerable assurance and some address, we may even get occasionally information directly from such persons.

To the female sex we are indebted for some of our most important articles of news; but as
this

this and some other sources are too delicate to be enlarged upon, I here draw the curtain.

There is another means of early intelligence, often more useful than any. When conjectures are formed by politicians, that a particular occurrence is likely to take place, immediately form facts from such conjectures—import them in private letters from your valuable correspondents at Hamburgh, Vienna, Lisbon, or Constantinople,—make such a detail of circumstances as to give your fabrication an air of truth ; but always endeavour to understand something of the subject, and also the situation of the place about which you speak, otherwise you will be apt to commit sad blunders. If once in a hundred times you have been right in your conjecture, you have matter of triumph for months—if any thing, in general similar, however differing in particulars, has occurred, it is still a confirmation of your prior intelligence—Nay, I have even known an ingenious Editor persuade his readers, that a directly contrary piece of news was a corroboration of his statement—a letter from *Buonaparte* has proved the truth of his having been assassinated by the *Tripoline Gentleman*. At all events, these fabrications afford equal satisfaction, especially if agreeable to the readers' wishes, as if they were facts.—It is *News*, not *Truth*, that is looked for. A paper that would attempt to confine itself to genuine and authentic intelligence, would find
few

few purchasers, while another, daily filled with agreeable and flattering lies, will be read with avidity.

When by any of the practices I have mentioned, you procure or make a novel article, *stop the press* to announce it—publish a *second edition*—exhibit it to the gaping passengers, in large characters, at your window, and, whether true or false, fail not to puff it for weeks afterwards. It is almost superfluous to mention that a *second edition* means only the insertion, instead of something else, of this wonderful news, which is for that purpose kept back in a few of the first copies thrown off.

Among the sources of prior intelligence, I had almost omitted to enumerate articles fabricated, as taken from the French Journals—received *by express*—and by you *exclusively*. You may even go so far as to forge an entire Paris Paper; but this is both too dangerous and expensive to be practised, unless either you or your friends intend a great stroke in the Alley; and it is not a scheme that will bear frequent repetition.

In manufacturing news, you must consider the description of your readers. Some will swallow almost any thing favourable to their wishes, although notoriously false, and however improbable or extravagant, especially if you give it boldly and without blushing—for it is possible to blush upon paper. But if your readers be tainted with

with skepticism, you must be somewhat more upon your guard, so as to give at least a plausibility to your tales.

Whatever licence you take in fabricating yourself, beware of the fabrications of others; and above all, receive with caution anonymous news, however tempting; otherwise you may be egregiously gulled and made ridiculous, by wags or designing enemies. One of our most *enlightened* Journals fell into this snare. With great parade the Editor published a letter, of indisputable authenticity, from his *valuable correspondent*, JAMES CAMPBELL, detailing some absolute impossibilities, (such as there being found on board of a French seventy-four gun ship, taken on the coast of Scotland, by a few unarmed peasants, several chests, each containing ten thousand stand of arms—or *about seventy tons weight!*) and was compelled, a few days after, to acknowledge, that the whole was an imposition on his credulity, and his boasted correspondent as much a fiction as the news. But—

“ The pleasure surely is as great,

“ Of being cheated, as to cheat.”

And were the individual *Jamie Campbell* to write another letter, equally gratifying, the Editor would insert it; and, what is more, his readers would believe it.

I knew a paper commence its *luminous* course,
with

with a story (printed in *horn-book* characters) of the French General *Dumourier's* army, having laid down their arms to the *Duke of Brunswick*, who was within a dozen miles march of Paris; and defend this tale for more than a month after it was known to have been false; yet this paper is still considered in the first circles, as an infallible source of correct intelligence.

When you tell a story that is discovered to be a lie, assert that you copied it from a morning paper, notorious for falsehood:—as this description will apply to most of your rivals, it is not easy to detect you; but, if you should find that you cannot throw it off yourself, stand to it boldly, and brazen it out. If, for example, you should give an account of a serjeant diverting the course of a cannon ball with his hand, insist upon the truth of it, and demonstrate in every subsequent paper, how easily it could be done.

There are fabrications of the more humble kind, which you may make without number, without bounds, and without risk. I allude to those wonderful occurrences which never fail to attract attention, especially among female readers; such are accounts of a man being in good health and sound understanding, at a hundred and fifty years of age---a woman being delivered of five stout children, four boys and a girl---a mule bringing forth a colt---a monkey beating a bulldog in fair combat---a woman living eight days

buried in the snow, &c. &c. This ingenious and innocent species of fiction I particularly recommend to the Sunday papers, their readers in general delighting in *miracles*, and having very wide throats.

It gives the public a great idea of the truth, as well as importance of your information, if you throw out hints of the impropriety of communicating all you know upon the subject---and when you find that a rival print has got an article of intelligence before you, you may safely say that you knew this long ago, but did not think it prudent to make it public---“ I always (says Justice Woodcock) thought that Thomas was a better man’s child than he appeared to be, *though I never mentioned it.*” When any political event occurs, remind your readers that you foretold it---*let them find out where.*

The Monthly Magazines and Reviews are an extensive source of literary intelligence, poetry, and a variety of miscellaneous matter. These you may pillage with impunity: and as you procure them the day before their publication, they appear as original in your journal, as in those from which you took them. It is, however, best to take your *original poetry* from *old* magazines. I presume, I need not advise you never to be without a copy of that admirable comic author, Mr. JOSEPH MILLER. There are also a variety of ingenious French works, of the same description,

tion, from which your translator may afford you a constant supply of attic salt.

The Leading Article is that which, of all others, requires most genius and talent. As you, perhaps, have neither, you may adopt the sentiments, only changing the language, of a paper of the preceding day ; or you may pick up some ideas in the coffee-house, or in the company of your more brilliant brother editors. In the abridgment, under this head, of your elsewhere-detailed intelligence, take care not to deviate too much from the details, unless your doing so will answer a purpose to your party. Then indeed it is not only excusable, but laudable, especially as a great proportion of readers will be satisfied with your *résumé*, without troubling themselves with examining the particulars. Although I have already hinted at it, I may also mention the ease with which you can slip in a fabricated article among the details of foreign news, that may counteract the immediate impression of any unfavourable intelligence. In doing so, you consult not only your readers' feelings, but perhaps their health, which might be impaired by too great a depression of spirits from unwelcome news.

The reporting parliamentary debates is at best a *bore* ; but if one were obliged to go through this task conscientiously, it would be an intolerable fatigue. The easiest way I can advise, is to go into the House for half an hour, and from thence

thence to adjourn to the smoaking-room, where, from among the other reporters, you can pick up the names of the speakers, and perhaps some quotation, or other palpable point in their speeches—with such assistance you can easily furnish a debate, especially if you know any thing of the subject; and in many instances you have by this rule published speeches better than those that were delivered. If a question has been argued before, you can never be at a nonplus, if you know only who spoke. If at any time, for want of matter, you are obliged to cut short your report, you may take the merit of detailing it fully next day,—*from another paper*. But whatever may be your talents, your ingenuity, and your practice, never attempt to fabricate the report of a debate altogether in your study. I have known one of our most celebrated reporters, from a neglect of this precaution, furnish the public with a long and interesting debate, when there had been no House.

The reports of law cases are much easier—any friend about Westminster-hall will give you a *general* idea of the business of the day, so as to enable you to detail the *particulars*. Besides, the attornies or parties will be glad to furnish you with *their* account of the matter, and perhaps pay for inserting it.

The same means will assist you in theatrical criticism; and you may always pass an hour or

two in an agreeable lounge in a box, where you will hear the observations of those around you, respecting a new piece, or a new performer; here too you are sure to be assisted by the author or player; and it is easy to make some commonplace remarks, favourable or unfavourable, according as you are feed. But it looks ill to say that a new play was received with great applause, when it was actually *damned*.

As all your brethren do the same, you can have no scruple to prostitute your paper to the daily insertion of the most gross, impudent, clumsy, and hyperbolical praises, delivered *in your own name*, of certain public amusements, for payment of six or seven shillings.

When I mentioned the method of getting news from servants in great families, I meant to allude, not only to political intelligence, but also to, what is not the least attractive department of a paper, the news of the fashionable world, and the propagation of private scandal. Here, however, you must be upon your guard against prosecutions---individuals are apt to be vindictive: and those persons are naturally most tenacious of their character, who have least to lose. Do not forget that truth is a libel; and that you may be condemned to the payment of many thousand pounds, for an insinuation against the character of a woman, who is afterwards proved to have been guilty of the most criminal incontinence.

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I should take up too much of your valuable time, were I to detail the various methods by which you may libel individuals with impunity. I shall therefore, for the present, mention only one rule, out of many: first give your libel as strong as you please, but with no name: in the next paragraph introduce by name the person meant—thus:

“ On Sunday last, a certain lady of quality, not an hundred miles from Grosvenor-Square, was discovered in bed with her footman.”

“ Lady A—— was not last night in her box at the Opera.”

If with every precaution you should get into a scrape, and a prosecution be threatened, be as mean and cringing, as you were before insolent and abusive—make any concession; insert any apology, however degrading; submit, in short, to any thing, even to a horse-whipping, rather than risk a law-suit.

I cannot approve of the too general use of scissars and paste—altho’ you must fill your paper chiefly by copying from the others, it would certainly look better, if the paragraphs were put into something of a new dress. And, as the greater part of the articles you copy are probably false, you may occasionally alter the sense, as well as the language, so that your intelligence will become itself original.

It is still more awkward, always to copy literally

rally the observations and hits of your contemporaries—but, in altering these, take care not to let the point in the original evaporate; in short it is not safe to meddle with them, unless you have some wit yourself.

When you catch a subject for wit or abuse, do not run it down too much—do not, for example, if two ministers should appear drunk in the House of Commons, make above a hundred epigrams on the occurrence.

When you have occasion to speak of a rival paper, you cannot do it in too contemptuous a style, nor make too frequent application to it of the epithets *low*, *vulgar*, *contemptible*, *hireling*, *jacobin*, *sedition*, *consumptive*, *expiring*, *lying*, *vile*, *hangman-burnt*, *impudent*, *scurrilous*, and so forth. When you find your sale low, it may be attended with advantage to form a concert with a brother Editor, to abuse one another into notice.

Recommend to the conductors of the typographical department of your Journal, not to commit such blunders as totally to change the sense; otherwise your printer may be as ready to draw you into a prosecution, as you are to lead him into such a scrape. Every one has heard of an edition of the Bible, in which the eighth commandment was, by an error of the press, printed—"thou shalt commit adultery;" and it is evident, that in a thousand instances, the meaning of a sentence or paragraph may be altogether reversed,

reversed, by the addition or omission of the monosyllable *not*, or other such apparently insignificant word. Nay the misplacing of a comma, or misspelling of a word, may make a libel. A Paper admired in all the first circles, lately stated, that "one hundred thousand *Ruffians*, (meaning *Russians*) were ready to march against the French." Fortunately the Journal that made this blunder is of known loyalty, otherwise the libel would probably not have been overlooked by the *Russian Ambassador*.

A still more recent instance of the dangerous consequences of typographical mistakes, occurred to a paper of the first respectability, in the report of the Old Bailey Trials, April Sessions, 1799. It was stated that the Grand Jury came into court, and applied to be discharged; and that, after a suitable exhortation from LORD KENYON, they were "Ordered to be *privately whipped* and discharged." Such a paragraph naturally excited the indignation of the Grand Jurors, who next day held a meeting on the occasion. One of the number, being a person versed in the law of libels, observed, from LORD COKE, that to draw the figure of a gallows upon a person's back, was a libel; and as whipping was more disgraceful than hanging, *a fortiori*, to draw a cat-o-nine-tails on the backs of all the gentlemen present, was a still grosser libel; which was here farther aggravated by being directed against them as public characters, and
when

when in the exercise of one of the most honourable functions in the country. Upon these grounds it was resolved to apply to his Majesty's Attorney General, to institute a prosecution. One of the Jurors, however, having recommended to his brethren, to demand, in the first place, of the Editor, his reason for publishing this unprovoked, scandalous, false, and malicious libel, a committee was appointed for that purpose. On their applying to the Journalist, it was discovered that the whole was a mistake of the Compositor, who had omitted the words, "*three prisoners were ordered to be privately whipped,*" &c.—Now, although this explanation satisfied the Grand Jury, yet had they proceeded in a prosecution, the persons belonging to the newspaper must have been convicted; for, according to the law and practice, in cases of libel, the *quo animo* is not to be taken into consideration, and neither ignorance of the contents, or of the insertion of a libel, is an excuse to either Editor, Printer, or Publisher, each of whom is responsible for every thing contained in the paper.

Whatever complaints are heard of the badness of the times, no such *sedition sentiments* ever proceed from your mouths—you may indeed perhaps complain of the heavy stamp duties, but never of the decay of trade: on the contrary, the fame and circulation of your Journal is extending itself daily. It is, certainly, a neces-

fary rule to puff the quantity sold ; but it may be carried too far : some regard ought to be paid to decency, and attention ought also to be paid to memory. It appears inconsistent to say, that you sell *three thousand*, and, perhaps a month after, to boast to the same individual, that your sale has *increased to two thousand five hundred* ; especially if at the same time it be known that you do not circulate *seven hundred*. If you can prevail upon your pressmen to make an affidavit that the sale of your paper is upon the increase, it may have a good effect, but take care not to let them swear to the particular number thrown off, unless you should think it worth while to be at the expence of printing, for one day, twelve or fifteen hundred additional, for the purpose of reconciling their consciences.

This branch of the subject naturally leads me to mention the annual puff of the 1st of January. The manufacture of that piece of composition requires considerable ingenuity, and *poetical* fancy, especially as there is a general trial of skill upon the occasion ; you can however, have recourse to *precedents*. I have known an Editor succeed happily in this respect, by lying by, till the 2d of January, when he had all the field to himself, and the rest open to his animadversions ; but I cannot approve of this sort of jockeyship.

You must take every means to ingratiate yourself with the *newsmen*. Be not sparing in treats, or
even

even pecuniary gratifications. It is in their power to push you into notice, by not only recommending your paper, but by imposing, and and in a manner forcing it upon their customers. Many readers care little what paper they get, and to such your's is surely as good as any other.

The most profitable article being advertisements, or, as they are technically called, *Ads*, you ought to take every means to procure as many of these as possible. Employ a person of address, or at least of impudence, as a *jackal*, to go through, among the advertising people, to solicit their *Ads*, to puff your paper as of all others the most universally read,—in short, either to reason or teize them into compliance. In order to decoy advertisements, you may insert a number *gratis*, to fill your page; in the same way as orders are given in the Theatre, to fill the house.

When a person is in the habit of advertising with you frequently, you can now and then clap in his *Ad* when you are short---it is easy to get your clerk or publisher to brazen it out, that it was so ordered.

When you find at any time that you cannot make a decent display of *Ads*, express your regret, that on account of the very important intelligence of the day, you have been obliged to postpone a number; and intreat your advertising friends, if they wish to have the advantage of a paper so universally read, and whose sale "is
unprecedented

unprecedented in the annals of newspapers," to be early in their application.

But, if with every artifice you cannot procure advertisements, make a merit of dropping them altogether, to afford room for a greater quantity of news; which will give you a pretence for raising your paper three halfpence or two-pence in price.

One material article of profit in our profession is technically called *INK*, from its saving of that article. Under this is comprehended the money received for *Ads* never inserted. That perquisite properly belongs to the publisher, but of which you are allowed your share; or, at least, you pay him less salary, in consideration of his exclusive enjoyment of this privilege. But the grand article under this head, is money received for suppressing intelligence, that is, for not exposing certain facts, or certain characters. How many *Times* has it happened, that to be the *Herald*, announcing the publication, on a future day, of the detail of a law-case, or some other particular circumstance, which a party concerned wished to be hushed, has brought the Editor as much money, as a week's profits put all together.

I shall not trespass farther upon your time; but, hoping you will reap advantage from the hints I have thrown out, I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

LONDON,

July 12th, 1799.

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APPENDIX.

The following humourous Letter, which appeared in the Public Advertiser a good many years ago, and may be new to a number of Readers, will form a proper Supplement to the preceding Advice. The reputed Author of this Supplement is CALEB WHITEFOORD, Esq.

MR. WOODFALL,

WHILST you and your correspondents are so laudably employed in watching over the welfare of the state, keeping a jealous eye on Ministers, and pointing out the *errors* of Government, I wish (if you could but find time for it) that you would pay some little attention to your own *errors*.

Perhaps it will appear the highest degree of presumption, to offer advice to a person in *your* eminent station; *one* who every day (Sundays excepted) dictates to ministers, and counsels kings; *one* who is read and admired in every part of the British dominions.

It is for this very reason, Sir, that I think it incumbent on me to tell you of your *mistakes*; for you cannot say with Job, "*Albeit that I have erred, mine ERROR remaineth with MYSELF.*" No, Mr. Woodfall, *your* errors circulate far and wide; they misrepresent many, and mislead more; in short, the errors I mean, are *errors of the press*, or, as my learned friend Sir James Hodges expresses them, in *one* English-Latin-singular-plural word, *erratum*s.

Of

Of all errata, the most *harmless* are those which make stark-staring *nonsense*. These are never imputed to the writer, but are corrected by the reader, in his own mind, as he goes along. But the *dangerous* ones are those which make a kind of half-sense, and pass current as the sense of the *author*, until the day following, when your list of errata transfers the blame from the writer to the printer. However, I must say that printers (with all their professions of candour) are as little apt to acknowledge *their* errors as the rest of mankind: for not one erratum in ten is ever acknowledged: and, indeed, I suppose they very seldom would, unless at the particular desire of the writer.

As I have said much about the *errors of the press*, it may naturally be expected that I should produce some proofs of what I have asserted. This I am enabled to do, having paid particular attention to them for some time past, and having looked more sharply after them, than the promotions civil or military, the prices of corn or of stocks, the list of ships or bankrupts, or of those paragraphs which inform who is dead, who is married, or who is hanged.

But now for the particulars of the charge.

I have known you throw an injurious reflection on all the crowned heads in Europe at one stroke; for instead of *potentates*, you have called them *potatoes*, as if they had been *mere vegetables*. As to the King of Prussia, you talk of *him* in a different style; for, instead of the *Hera* of Prussia, you have made him the *Nero*. Next day comes your apology, or your *erratum*, which sometimes, instead of mending matters, makes things worse, and like an architect, in stopping one hole, makes two; as I remember my old friend Alderman Faulkner, of Dublin, corrected an error in *his* Journal, "Erratum in our last; for *his* Grace the *Dutchess* of Dorset, read *her* Grace the *Duke* of Dorset." Indeed, a blunder seems to be something of the
nature

nature of a *bog*, the more you struggle the deeper you get into it. But, to proceed. You have on several occasions used the *Doge* of Genoa extremely ill, and never have made him the least apology for omitting the last letter in his title; though if you *had* desired your readers next day, instead of *Dog*, to read *Doge*, I do confess that it would have been no great reparation.

I remember the Irish Parliament, some time ago, were offended at something in the Public Advertiser; and took up the matter so *warmly*, that they ordered the paper to be burnt. Now, Mr. Woodfall, whether *you* have taken umbrage also and like-*wise*, or whether it proceeds from negligence, I know not; but certain it is, that several unlucky mistakes have happened relative to that respectable body. At their first meeting you told us, (instead of a *bill*) that a motion would be made for leave to bring in a *bull*; and afterwards another motion, that the order of the *Dey* be read, as if it was an assembly on the coast of *Barbary*.——You told us, one day, that *Lord* ——, of the kingdom of Ireland, had been safely delivered of a daughter; and we were all very anxious, on my lord's account, till the day following, when you delivered his lordship of the burthen, and brought the child into the world in a more natural way.

In a late scuffle under the Piazza, Covent Garden, you informed us that an Irish officer had got a *confusion* in his head; and you made no apology afterwards, thinking, I suppose, there was no occasion for any, as you were right to a *t*.

Not long ago you advertised a speedy cure for *raptures*; and I am afraid it gave some wicked bachelor occasion to scoff at the holy state of matrimony; for, as the devil would have it (I mean one of *your* devils), the very next advertisement

advertisement to it was from a gentleman who wanted a wife, and over it was printed Matrimony in capitals; consequently it appeared that *matrimony* was the most speedy and effectual cure for *raptures*, though of ever so long standing, &c. &c.

I have known you advertise, instead of a *never-failing* remedy, an *ever-failing* remedy: now, Sir, though this might be strictly true, "yet I hold it not proper that it should be so set down," as I suppose the quack-doctor paid you his money for conveying a very different sense to the public. In a receipt lately published for the cure of the plague, instead of *rue*, you put *rice*; and so make a *pudding* of it; and in advertising a course of lectures, you turned a *syllabus* into a *syllabub*; and called the perpetual *motion* a perpetual *notion*.

I wish you would be a little more cautious in advertising *Salivation not necessary*; for it happened, that by omitting the *i* in *salivation*, you gave great offence to some very good christians in my neighbourhood; and also gave occasion to some wicked *punsters* to observe, that it was not the *first* time an *eye* had been lost in *salivation*; nay, that some people had been so unlucky as to lose a *couple*.

There is another advertisement which frequently occurs, beginning with, "*Whereas several evil-minded persons, &c.*" — One day you made it *evil-minded parsons*, which was extremely unlucky; for in these times of *infidelity*, people are too apt to scoff at the clergy, and indeed at all serious subjects; as to myself, I must confess that I am particularly hurt at those *impertinent levities* with which some people indulge themselves, being a person of a serious turn of mind, and of a disposition rather saturnine and grave.

It too often happens, Mr. Woodfall, that "what should be *grave* you turn to *farce*." I remember in your papers,

paper, a sensible, pathetic letter, signed *A Citizen*: he laments the *internal* state of this country, and you made it the *infernal* state; when he exclaimed, *sad reverse!* you made him cry out, *sad reverie!* he disapproved of all *national* reflections, you made him disapprove of all *rational* reflections; and, talking of the *fate* of empires, you made him say the *fat* of empires. Now as there are so many standing jokes about citizens being fond of *fat* (whether turtle fat or venison fat), this unlucky mistake quite spoiled the letter, disoblged my friend the *Citizen*, and “all the *fat* was in the fire.” And here I cannot help taking notice of a paragraph some time since, containing an account of the election of a worthy alderman for a certain ward; when, instead of saying he was *duly* elected, you said he was *dully* elected, and thereby afforded a handle for breaking some common-place jest on that respectable body of men the Court of Aldermen. Another time, in the account of an entertainment given by a worthy alderman to the deputy and common-council of his ward, where they *dined* on turtle, you said they *died* on turtle; as if they had all ate till they choaked or burst; whereas, on the contrary, it was extremely remarkable, that none either over-ate themselves, or caught a surfeit that day.

From several articles, Mr. Woodfall, one would be apt to conclude, that you were no great *geographer*; for you tell us of corsairs fitted out from *Turin*, instead of *Tunis*; and that the *Chinese* had revolted against the Spaniards, instead of the *Chilese*; now, though these two nations are on different sides of the globe, I suppose you thought they were near neighbours, being within an *ell* of each other. Last year, when the Russian fleet took the Isle of *Lemnos*, you told us that part of the squadron remained at the Isle of *Candy*, and the rest were going to attack the Isle of

Lemons: you supposed, no doubt, that *Candy* was a sugar island, and that they were gone to the Isle of *Lemons* for fruit, and so between them to supply the fleet (*pro bono publico*) with *punch*.

One day you told us the combined army of the Turks and Tartars (instead of a *Kam*) was commanded by a *Ram*; as if they had been a parcel of sheep: and when it was expected the two armies were coming to *Ælion*, you said they were coming to *Ælion*; and as there was a considerable fall of stocks about that time, I have reason to think it was owing to the above report, or to some other equally alarming.

I trembled for you during the whole time of the congress at *Fockzany*; it is a ticklish word in the hands of a careless compositor, and one does not know what terrible work he might make of it. Apropos, it is not long since you advertised a view of the canal of *Venice*, and you made it the canal of *Venus*; and in the account of a housebreaking, instead of, the rogues broke in at the window, you said they broke in at the *widow*.

When you informed us that a certain lady was gone to pass the holydays at her country-seat near *Corydon*, every reader supposed that some *scandal* was meant, till the next day when we learnt that there was no *Corydon* in the case, and that her ladyship was only gone to her country-seat near *Croydon*.

One day you told us, that some English lord (whose name I forgot) was arrived at Naples with his *tabor*; travelling with a *tabor* seemed to be an odd kind of conceit; but his lordship (*apparement*) was fond of music, though the *tabor* and pipe seemed more adapted to a *lugged bear* than a lord on his travels: thus we reasoned, till the *erratum* of next day desired us, 'for *tabor* to read *tutor*.'

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If your compositors are bad geographers, they are at least as bad *arithmeticians*: wherever sums occur, they are sure to make a sad *figure*. I remember, at different times last year, they made the *compulsatory* India loan 14,000, 140,000, and sometimes 14,000,000; in short, they have no adequate ideas of figures; and as to *ciphers*, they consider them as *mere nothings*; and that adding or taking away two or three of them from a sum makes no difference at all.

I have known you turn a matter of *bearsay*, into a matter of *heresy*; *Damon*, into a *Demon*; a *delicious* girl, into a *delirious* girl; the comic *muse*, into a comic *mouse*; a Jewish *Rabbi*, into a Jewish *Rabbit*; and when a correspondent, lamenting the corruption of the times, exclaimed, *O Mozes!* you made him cry, *O Moses!*

You should consider, Mr. Printer, that there is a material difference between acting with the utmost *lenity*, and utmost *levity*; between *factious* and *facetious*; *fellow* and *felon*; *imprudent* and *impudent*; *resolution* and *revolution*; *Runny-mead* and *running mad*; *loud professions* and *lewd professions*; *words* and *works*; *soaring* and *roaring*; *Thavies Inn* and *Thieves Inn*; *minutes* and *minuets*; *rubies* and *bubbies*; a *tube* and a *tub*: all of which words I have observed you, Sir, at times, use *indiscriminately*.

I know you will say that the people ought to consider the constant hurry which attends the publication of a daily paper; that the Public Advertiser is in so great request, and and people are so eager to get it, "*with all its imperfections on its head*," that you really have not time to be more correct.—Ah, Master Woodfall! it would be well for mankind if reformation, like charity, were always to begin *at home*; and that people would try to mend *themselves*, instead of bestowing so much fruitless and thankless pains in admonishing their neighbours. You, Sir, have bestowed much
time

time and labour, and oil, floods of ink, and reams of paper, in advising ministers of state, and correcting the measures of Government; and, after all, I dare say *you yourself* will allow that they are at this moment not one bit better or wiser than when you first undertook to mend them.

Therefore take an old man's advice, friend Woodfall; set a pattern to thy brother printers; leave for a while the care of the state to those who are *paid* for it—look at home; begin a reformation *there*, and “*correct thyself for the example of others.*”

I am,

Thy sincere well-wisher,

EMENDATOR.

THE END.

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